

Abstract

An improved method and apparatus for vending products, and particularly beverage containers, of varied sizes, shapes and configurations are disclosed. The products to be vended are aligned in selectable ordered queues within a vending machine that can include a transparent front panel. A container release assembly is positioned at the end of the vend queue to vend a container upon activation. The container release assembly acts on the first-in-line container to be vended and on the second-in-line container, by retaining the second-in-line container while the first is being released. The container release assembly acts on the containers from two opposite sides of the containers.